United Nations E/1998/72

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
19 June 1998

Original: English

Substantive session of 1998
New York, 6-31 July 1998
Item 12 of the provisional agenda*
Non-governmental organizations

Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on the first part of its 1998 session (New York, 18-29 May 1998)

Summary

The present report contains three draft decisions calling for action by the Economic and Social Council.

By draft decision I, the Council would:

(a) Grant consultative status to 70 non-governmental organizations which had applied;

(b) Reclassify one non-governmental organization from Roster to special consultative status.

By draft decision II, the Council would grant Roster status to eight organizations, pursuant to Council decision 1996/302.

By draft decision III, the Council would approve the participation of four organizations of indigenous people not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council in the work of the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights established by the Council in its resolution 1995/32 to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people.

The attention of the Council is also drawn to Committee decision 1998/101 concerning the methods of work of the Committee and the Secretariat.

* E/1998/100.

98-18471 (E) 140798

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention	1–2	3
	A. Draft decisions	1	3
	B. Decision brought to the attention of the Council	2	6
II.	Applications for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations	3–39	7
	A. Applications for consultative status deferred from the 1997 session of the Committee	4–20	7
	B. New applications for consultative status	21–35	9
	C. Requests for reclassification deferred from the 1997 session	36–39	11
III.	Review of quadrennial reports deferred from the resumed 1997 session	40–47	12
IV.	Implementation of Economic and Social Council decision 1996/302	48–49	13
V.	Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 and decision 1995/304	50–71	14
	A. Quadrennial reports	51–54	14
	B. Accreditations issued to non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council	55–61	14
	C. Other procedures	62	15
	D. Consideration of special reports	63–71	15
VI.	Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/32	72–73	17
VII.	Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 1994/50	74–75	18
VIII.	Organization of the session	76–89	19
	A. Opening and duration of the session	76	19
	B. Attendance	77–82	19
	C. Election of officers	83–85	19
	D. Agenda	86	20
	E. Request by a non-governmental organization for the inclusion of an item on the agenda of the Economic and Social Council	87–89	20
IX.	Adoption of the report of the Committee on the first part of its 1998 session	90	21
Annex			
	List of documents before the Committee at the first part of its 1998 session		22

I. Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

A. Draft decisions

1. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft decisions:

DRAFT DECISION I

Applications for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations

The Economic and Social Council decides:

(a) To grant the following non-governmental organizations consultative status:

General consultative status

African-American Islamic Institute

Al-Khoei Foundation

Red de Salud de las Mujeres Latinoamericanas Y del Caribe

Special consultative status

Action for Integrated Rural and Tribal Development Social Service Society (AIRTDS)

Advisory Commission of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD)

African Services Committee, Inc.

Agencia Latinoamericana de Información (ALAI)

Agir ensemble pour les droits de l'homme

Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK)

All-Russian Society of Disabled People

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

ANPED-Northern Alliance for Sustainability

Arab Women's Forum (AISHA)

Asian Alliance of Appropriate Technology Practitioners, Inc.

Associação de Mulheres Contra a Violência (AMCV)

Association Algerienne de solidarité aux malades respiratoires

Association des études internationales

Association des femmes éducatrices du Mali (AFEM)

Association internationale des mouvements familiaux de formation rurale (AIMFR)

Association of Presbyterian Women of Aotearoa, New Zealand

Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Small Scale Industries

Association pour la promotion de l'emploi et du logement (APEL)

Association to Aid Refugees, Japan (AAR, Japan)

Azerbaijan Women and Development Centre (AWDC)

Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der senioren-organisationen (BAGSO)

Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association, Inc.

BUSCO-Business Association for the World Social Summit

Canadian Federation of University Women

Catholics for a Free Choice (CFFC)

Centre for Psychology and Social Change

Centre for Women, the Earth, the Divine

China Disabled Persons' Federation (CDPF)

China Society for Human Rights (CSHRS)

Christian Aid

Cohort for Research on Environment, Urban Management and Human Settlement (CREUMHS)

Collectif sénégalais des africaines pour la promotion de l'education relative à l'environnement (COSAPERE)

Comité catholique contre la faim et pour le développement (CCFD)

Comité national d'action pour les droits de l'enfant et de la femme (CADEF)

Couple to Couple League International, Inc.

Eagle Forum

EcoPeace-Middle East Environment NGO Forum

Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia

The Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute

General Confederation of Trade Unions

Global Alliance for Women's Health

Group for International Solidarity (GRINSO)

Interfaith International

International Club for Peace Research (ICPR)

International Health Awareness Network

International Investment Centre

International Psychoanalytical Association Trust

International Union of Psychological Science (IUPSYS)

International Women's Writing Guild

International Women's Year Liaison Group

International Youth Foundation

IPAS

JMJ Children's Fund of Canada, Inc.

Ladies Charitable Society

Marangopoulos Foundation for Human Rights

Mercy Corps International

Miramed Institute

National Federation of International Immigrant Women Associations (RIFFI)

New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council

Organization for the Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America (OSPAAL)

Program for Research and Documentation for Sustainable Development (PROSUS)

Rainforest Foundation International

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

Roster

Armenian International Women's Association

Armenian Relief Society

Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (SSAA)

(b) To reclassify one organization from Roster to special consultative status:

World Organization Against Torture

DRAFT DECISION II

Implementation of Economic and Social Council decision 1996/302

The Economic and Social Council decides to grant Roster status to the following non-governmental organizations:

Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development

FORJA

Foundation for Global Community

Free Youth Association of Bucharest

Nuclear Age Peace Foundation

Rainforest Alliance

Scientific and Cultural Society of Pakistan

Shirkat Gah

DRAFT DECISION III

Applications from organizations of indigenous people not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council for participation in the work of the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples

The Economic and Social Council decides to approve the participation of the following four organizations of indigenous people not in consultative status with the Council in the work of the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights, whose establishment was authorized by the Council in its resolution 1995/32:

Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East

Foundation of Aboriginal and Islander Research Action

Indigenous Initiative for Peace

Western Shoshone National Council

B. Decision brought to the attention of the Council

2. The following decision of the Committee is brought to the attention of the Council:

Decision 1998/101. **Guidelines to improve the methods of work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations and the Secretariat with respect to quadrennial reports**

The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations decides to adopt the following guidelines, which should be applied so as to improve the methods of work of the Committee and the Secretariat concerning quadrennial reports:

1. The Committee reiterates its decision that only quadrennial reports elaborated in accordance with its guidelines and submitted to the Secretariat no later than 1 June preceding the regular session of the Committee will be transmitted to it for consideration.

2. As soon as possible thereafter, the Secretariat will circulate to the members of the Committee a list of organizations that have submitted quadrennial reports in accordance with paragraph 1 above. The list shall include the name of the organization, its address, consultative status and the date on which consultative status was granted. The reports, in original form, shall be distributed to the members of the Committee. These reports shall be translated into all official languages of the United Nations, in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 1997/210, and issued in official form as soon as possible.

3. Members of the Committee will have until the first day of the regular session of the Committee to send in writing to the Secretariat their comments, reservations and questions on individual reports, or to signal their intention to do so. If the formal documentation has not been made available, this deadline will be extended appropriately. Thereafter, the Secretariat will circulate a list of quadrennial reports on which no questions have been received. Without prejudice to the right of any member of the Committee to pose questions, express reservations or make comments on any report at that stage, note could then be taken of the quadrennial

reports on which no comments have been made as early as possible thereafter at the regular session of the Committee.

II. Applications for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations

3. The Committee considered item 3 of its agenda at its 650th to 666th meetings, from 18 to 29 May 1998. It had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General containing new applications for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations (E/C.2/1998/R.2 and Add.1-4).

A. Applications for consultative status deferred from the 1997 session of the Committee

4. The Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 1995, had decided to refer the application of the International Committee of Peace and Human Rights to the Committee for further consideration (Council decision 1995/305, subpara. (d)). At its 1996 session, the Committee had taken note of a letter from the organization stating that it would be appropriate for the Committee to suspend consideration of the application of the International Committee of Peace and Human Rights, without prejudice, for one year (see E/1996/102, para. 5). At its 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the International Committee of Peace and Human Rights to its 1998 session. The Committee had also decided that the organization should be asked to provide the information requested by the Committee at its 1996 session.

5. At its 653rd meeting, on 19 May, the Committee decided to defer consideration of the application of the International Committee of Peace and Human Rights to its 1999 session.

6. At its 1996 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the Citizens' Disaster Response Centre Foundation, Inc. to its 1997 session (see E/1996/102, para. 29). At its 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the Citizens' Disaster Response Centre Foundation, Inc. to its 1998 session.

7. At its 653rd meeting, on 19 May, the Committee decided not to recommend to the Council that the Citizens' Disaster Response Centre Foundation, Inc. be granted consultative status in the light of information provided to the Committee that the organization's credentials had been suspended in the country in which it is based.

8. At its 1996 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of Eagle Forum to its 1997 session (see E/1996/102, para. 29). At its 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the Eagle Forum to its 1998 session.

9. At its 656th meeting, on 21 May, the Committee decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that Eagle Forum be granted special consultative status. The representative of Costa Rica stated that her delegation, while willing to go along with the consensus decision of the Committee, nevertheless had reservations regarding the decision, and made the following statement:

> "My delegation maintains its view that the non-governmental organization Eagle Forum, given the position that was expressed by its distinguished representative, does

not comply with the criteria established in Council resolution 1996/31, that is, it does not contribute to the goals of the Council and other important organs of the United Nations system, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

"In terms of the credibility and prestige of the United Nations, my delegation feels that it cannot support an opinion that undermines the Convention on the Rights of the Child and that is contrary to the goals of UNICEF, which have been promoted for many years by its former Executive Director, Jim Grant, and its current Executive Director, Carol Bellamy, who have expressed their fervent wish that the universal ratification of the Convention be achieved. We have all supported this goal at the Third Committee when adopting relevant resolutions. But it is evident that what was indicated by the representative of Eagle Forum does not represent a positive contribution to the goals of UNICEF, an organization of the United Nations system that we all love and respect.

"However, if the Committee decides to grant consultative status to Eagle Forum, my delegation will not block a consensus decision by a negative vote. Let the Committee assume the responsibility. We will respect the decision and maintain our reservation."

10. At its 1996 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the World League for Freedom and Democracy to its 1997 session. At its 1997 session, the Committee had taken note of a letter from the organization asking that consideration of its application be deferred to the 1998 session.

11. At its 653rd meeting, on 19 May, the Committee decided to defer consideration of the application of the World League for Freedom and Democracy to its 1999 session.

12. At its 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the Jewish Agency for Israel to its 1998 session.

13. At its 653rd meeting, on 19 May, the Committee decided to defer further consideration of the application of the Jewish Agency for Israel to its 1999 session, following the receipt by the Committee of a letter from the organization asking for a deferral.

14. At its 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the Assyrian National Congress to its 1998 session.

15. At its 653rd meeting, on 19 May, the Committee decided to defer further consideration of the application of the Assyrian National Congress to its 1999 session.

16. At its 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of Humanity International to its resumed 1997 session. At its resumed 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer further consideration of the application of Humanity International to its 1998 session, not having received the clarifications that it had requested of the organization.

17. At its 653rd meeting, on 19 May, the Committee decided not to recommend to the Council that Humanity International be granted consultative status because it had failed to respond adequately to any of the questions posed by the Committee and its application did not contain enough substance to merit the granting of status.

18. At its 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer further consideration of the application of the Program for Research and Documentation for a Sustainable Society (PROSUS) to its 1998 session.

19. At its 654th meeting, on 20 May, the Committee decided to recommend that the Council grant special consultative status to the Program for Research and Documentation for a Sustainable Society (PROSUS).

20. The Committee decided to recommend that the Economic and Social Council grant the following non-governmental organizations consultative status (see sect. I.A above, draft decision I):

Special consultative status

Eagle Forum

Program for Research and Documentation for a Sustainable Society (PROSUS)

B. New applications for consultative status

21. At its 658th meeting, on 22 May, the Committee decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council grant general consultative status to the Al-Khoei Foundation. The observer for Iraq expressed his delegation's reservations regarding this decision and made the following statement:

"Mr. Chairman,

"Although the decision already taken by the Committee to grant Al-Khoei Foundation consultative status was hasty and premature, my delegation pays full respect to it. It would have been better if due time and considerable attention had been given to the preoccupations and doubts raised by my delegation. But it appears that some delegates were insisting on giving a deaf ear to these arguments and doubts. This raises two serious questions. First, why did some delegates insist on granting the above-mentioned Foundation consultative status in this hasty and suspicious manner, while a great number of other non-governmental organizations' applications have been deferred from one year to another in order that the Committee might clarify the nature of their activities. The truth of the matter is that the same Governments that have been involved in acts of aggression against my country have insisted on the adoption of this hasty decision. This may confirm the doubts raised by my delegation that some members of this Foundation are involved in serious political acts that jeopardize the safety and security of my country as it has been expressed by my delegation.

"Second, Mr. Chairman, is the question of transparency, which has also been previously raised by my delegation. We think it is important to pay due consideration to the comments and proposals extended by the observer members, and we should never forget that an observer member will one day be a member of the Committee, and vice versa.

"Having said that, Mr. Chairman, my delegation would like to express its reservation again on granting Al-Khoei Foundation consultative status, and notes with regret that this decision will affect the credibility of the Committee. It would be appreciated if this intervention was recorded."

22. At the same meeting, the representative of Cuba stated that it would not like to join in the consensus.

23. At its 659th meeting, on 26 May, the Committee decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that Roster status be granted to Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia. Some delegations requested that the report reflect that, although they were willing to join in the consensus, they nevertheless held reservations regarding the recommendation of consultative status to this organization.

24. At its 651st meeting, on 18 May, the Committee decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that special consultative status be granted to Action Health, Inc. At its 666th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee decided to keep the application pending

following a request to this effect by an Observer State. The delegation of the United States disassociated itself from the decision for the same reasons expressed below regarding the application of the European Council of WIZO Federations.

25. At its 651st meeting, on 18 May, the Committee decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that special consultative status be granted to the European Council of WIZO Federations.

26. At its 660th meeting, on 26 May, the Committee took up consideration of the application in the light of new information which was made available to the members of the Committee, and it was decided that the issue should remain pending until the second part of its session in June. The representative of the United States of America asked that the following statement be reflected in the report of the Committee:

> "The United States delegation expressed its view that the Committee had erred procedurally in deciding, in essence, to reopen its decision regarding the consultative status of the European Council of WIZO Federations at the Committee's June 1998 session, because no information had been presented to show that such a decision was warranted. Although the United States delegation did not block consensus, the delegate stated its strong objection to this action on the part of the Committee and disassociated itself from the decision."

27. The representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland stated that his delegation supported the position taken by the United States.

28. At the 665th meeting, on 29 May, the representative of the United States requested a roll-call vote on the proposal to recommend special consultative status to the Organization for the Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America (OSPAAL). The proposal was adopted by a roll-call vote of 7 to 1, with 5 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour: China, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Russian Federation, Sudan, Tunisia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

29. After the proposal was adopted, statements were made by the representatives of Cuba, China, the Sudan, India and the United States.

30. At its 661st meeting, on 27 May, the Committee decided to defer further consideration of the application of the Legal Research and Resource Centre for Human Rights to the second part of its session in June 1998.

31. At its 666th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee decided to defer further consideration of the application of Centre de Recherches, d'Etudes, de Documentation et d'Information sur la Femme (CREDIF) to the second part of its 1998 session.

32. Also at the same meeting, the Committee decided to defer further consideration of the application of Jammu and Kashmir Council for Human Rights to the second part of its 1998 session, so as to allow the organization to respond to the questions posed by the Committee.

33. At its 656th meeting, on 21 May, the Committee decided to defer consideration of the application of the Union de Escritores Y Artistas de Cuba to the second part of its 1998 session, following a request to this effect by the representative of Cuba.

34. The following applications were also deferred to the second part of the Committee's 1998 session since no response to questions posed by the Committee had been received:

Community Social Welfare Foundation

International Group of P&I Clubs

International Rescue Committee

Union interafricaine des droits de l'homme

35. The Committee recommended that the Economic and Social Council grant consultative status to 71 non-governmental organizations (see sect. I.A above, draft decision I).

C. Requests for reclassification deferred from the 1997 session

36. The Committee considered requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations, deferred from its 1997 session, at its 654th, 656th and 664th meetings, on 20, 21 and 28 May.

37. At its 656th meeting, on 21 May, the Committee considered a request for reclassification to special consultative status of the World Organization Against Torture, an organization on the Roster, and decided to recommend that the Economic and Social Council reclassify the World Organization Against Torture from Roster to special consultative status (see sect. I.A above, draft decision I).

38. The representative of Indonesia requested that the following position of her delegation and concern on this matter be reflected in the report of the Committee:

> "The Indonesian delegation still questions the reference to 'Timor Oriental' or 'East Timor' in the application of the World Organization against Torture, where East Timor is listed along with countries even though East Timor is not a country. And we have not found the explanation from the non-governmental organization for this reference to be satisfactory or convincing."

39. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, the Committee considered a request for reclassification to special consultative status of International P.E.N., an organization on the Roster, and decided to defer further consideration of this organization's request to the second part of its 1998 session, following the request of a delegation for additional time to study the information provided by the organization.

III. Review of quadrennial reports deferred from the resumed 1997 session

40. The Committee considered item 4 of its agenda at its 654th, 664th and 666th meetings, on 20, 28 and 29 May. It had before it quadrennial reports for the period 1992-1995 on the activities of six non-governmental organizations in general and special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that had been deferred from the resumed 1997 session.

41. The Committee took note of the quadrennial reports of four non-governmental organizations deferred from the resumed 1997 session.

42. At its resumed 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the quadrennial report of the International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations to its 1998 session.

43. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, the Committee, noting that the requested clarifications had not yet been provided, decided to defer consideration of the report to the second part of its 1998 session.

44. At its resumed 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the quadrennial report of Mutual Assistance of the Latin American Government Oil Companies to its 1998 session.

45. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, the Committee, noting that the requested clarifications had not been provided during the current session, decided to defer consideration of the report to the second part of its 1998 session.

46. At its resumed 1997 session, the Committee, while taking note of the report of CARE International, had requested the organization to provide clarifications concerning references to "Chechnya" and the "Republic of Korea" (see E/1998/8, para. 61).

47. At its 654th meeting, on 20 May, the Committee took note of the clarifications provided. The representative of the Russian Federation stated that his delegation would prefer that the full name of "Chechnya, Russian Federation" be used.

IV. Implementation of Economic and Social Council decision 1996/302

48. The Committee considered item 5 of its agenda at its 65th meeting, on 21 May 1998. It had before it an informal paper containing applications from non-governmental organizations that are currently on the Roster for the purposes of the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development to expand their participation in other fields of the Economic and Social Council.

49. At the same meeting, the Committee decided to recommend that the Economic and Social Council grant Roster status to eight non-governmental organizations (see sect. I.A above, draft decision II).

V. Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 and decision 1995/304

50. The Committee considered item 6 of its agenda at its 654th, 657th, 658th, 662nd and 664th to 666th meetings, from 20 to 22 and 27 to 29 May 1998.

A. Quadrennial reports

51. At its 658th meeting, on 22 May, the Committee held a preliminary discussion on how to facilitate the processing of quadrennial reports. Statements were made by the representatives of the United Kingdom, India and Cuba.

52. The Secretariat drew the attention of the Committee to the serious overload of work resulting from the unprecedented numbers of quadrennial reports and new applications for consultative status to be processed for the 1999 session of the Committee.

53. It was proposed that the Secretariat prepare a background paper outlining all of the problems associated with the processing of the quadrennial reports, including the proposals so far put forward by members of the Committee, among them the possibility of scheduling quinquennial reports or of seeking the Committee's decision on selective translation of reports prior to their consideration in session.

Guidelines to improve the methods of work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations and the Secretariat with respect to quadrennial reports

54. At the 666th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee adopted a decision entitled "Guidelines to improve the methods of work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations and the Secretariat with respect to quadrennial reports" (see sect. I.B above, decision 1998/101).

B. Accreditations issued to non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

55. At its 658th and 664th meetings, on 22 and 27 May, the Committee considered the question of accreditations issued to non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council in the context of the size of representation allowed to individual organizations and the possible need for a code of ethics to govern their conduct.

56. At the 658th meeting, on 22 May, the representative of Cuba circulated an informal paper on the issue, emphasizing that its provisions were intended not to penalize organizations but to facilitate their participation, and that the suggested limits would ensure that all non-governmental organizations would have equitable opportunity for representation.

57. In response to concerns expressed by the representative of the United Kingdom, the Chairman confirmed the Committee's competence to address this issue under paragraph 61 (a) of Council resolution 1996/31, regarding the Committee's responsibility for regular monitoring of the evolving relationship between non-governmental bodies and the United Nations.

58. At the 662nd meeting, on 27 May, in a statement made on behalf of both its members and other non-governmental organizations, representatives of the Conference of

Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO) questioned the need for establishing official limitations on the size of their organization's representation, stating that this could be better handled by the organizations themselves in cooperation with the chairpersons and organizing officials of the meeting in question. Regarding the proposed code of ethics, the representatives affirmed that whereas they were not opposed to this idea in principle, CONGO felt strongly that such a code should be formulated by the non-governmental organizations themselves. Finally, the representatives of CONGO strongly advocated the need for the establishment of regular and sustained consultations with the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations.

59. Statements were made by a number of delegations in support of the proposal for instituting regular consultations with a representative cross-section of non-governmental bodies, including those not in official relationship with the United Nations.

60. At the same meeting, upon the suggestion of the representative of Cuba, discussion of the issue was suspended pending further more broad-based debate on the subject.

61. The Committee decided to schedule consultations with non-governmental organizations in order to explore the issue further.

C. Other procedures

62. At its 665th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee expressed the view that the discussion on the code of ethics criteria of non-governmental organizations, which had been initiated at its 1997 resumed session, should resume at the inter-sessional consultation with CONGO and other non-governmental organizations in June 1998.

D. Consideration of special reports

63. At its 1997 resumed session, the Committee had requested Liberation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Council, to submit a special report pursuant to paragraph 61 (c) of Council resolution 1996/31 (see E/1998/8, paras. 45 and 46).

64. At its 657th meeting, on 21 May, the Committee had before it an informal paper containing the special report submitted by Liberation.

65. At the same meeting, one delegation, considering the explanations provided by the organization equivocal and insufficient, requested further clarifications and a categorical apology for the incidents involving individuals with a criminal past accredited by this organization, which had taken place during the forty-ninth session of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the fifty-third session of the Commission on Human Rights, both held at Geneva, as well as clarifications on other issues raised by the incidents.

66. At the 664th meeting, on 28 May, having examined the additional information provided by the organization, one delegation felt that the response of the organization was unsatisfactory and did not contain the apology requested. A number of additional questions were posed to the organization for which the responses would be examined by the Committee at the second part of its 1998 session.

67. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, the Committee had before it a letter from the United States Mission to the United Nations concerning certain activities of the Pan-African Islamic

Society for Agro Cultural Development (PAIS), a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Council.

68. At the same meeting, the Committee decided that a request for information would be conveyed through the Secretariat to this organization in order to give the organization an opportunity to explain its activities.

69. Pursuant to paragraph 61(c) of Council resolution 1996/31, the Committee also decided to request the organization to submit a special report to the Committee at its 1999 session.

70. At its 665th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee had before it a letter from the Government of Colombia informing the Chairman of the Committee that two non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council had accredited several individuals known to belong to an armed revolutionary group in Colombia for participation in the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights at Geneva. The Committee was informed that the matter had been brought to the attention of the Chairman of the fifty-fourth session of the Commission.

71. At the same meeting, the Committee decided that more detailed information on this matter should be provided both by the Government of Colombia and the Chairman of the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights.

VI. Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/32

72. At its 656th meeting, on 21 May, the Committee, in accordance with Council resolution 1995/32, continued its consideration of applications from organizations of indigenous people not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that are interested in participating in the work of the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights established by the Council to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people.

73. At the same meeting, the Committee decided to recommend that the Economic and Social Council authorize four organizations of indigenous people not in consultative status with the Council to participate in the work of the working group (see sect. I.A above, draft decision III).

VII. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 1994/50

74. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, the Committee had before it a letter from the International Lesbian and Gay Association addressed to the Chairman, in which the organization requested the Committee to consider reinstating its consultative status, which had been suspended by the Economic and Social Council in 1994.

75. At the same meeting, the Committee decided to ask the organization to submit a new application for consultative status, which the Committee would examine at a future session.

VIII. Organization of the session

A. Opening and duration of the session

76. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations held the first part of its 1998 session from 18 to 29 May 1998. The Committee held 17 meetings (650th to 666th).

B. Attendance

77. The representatives of the following States members of the Committee attended the session: Bulgaria, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ethiopia, Greece, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Madagascar, Paraguay, Philippines, Russian Federation, Sudan, Tunisia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

78. The following States Members of the United Nations were represented by observers: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, France, Italy, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine.

79. The following non-member State was represented by an observer: Holy See.

80. The following organization, having received a standing invitation to participate as an observer in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly, was represented by an observer: Palestine.

81. The following specialized agencies were represented: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

82. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: International Chamber of Commerce, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (general consultative status); Amnesty International, Baha'i International Community, Human Rights Watch, International League for Human Rights (special consultative status).

C. Election of officers

83. At the 650th meeting, on 18 May, the Committee elected the following officers by acclamation.

Chairman:
Wahid Ben Amor (Tunisia)

Vice-Chairmen:
Gautam Mukhopadhaya (India)
Sean McDonald (Ireland)
Emilia Castro de Barish (Costa Rica)

84. At its 653rd meeting, on 19 May, the Committee elected, by acclamation, Valentin Hadjiyski (Bulgaria) as Vice-Chairman.

85. At the 662nd meeting, on 27 May, it was decided that Mr. Sean McDonald (Ireland) would also serve as Rapporteur.

D. Agenda

86. At the 650th meeting, on 18 May, the Committee adopted the provisional agenda for its May 1998 session, as contained in document E/C.2/1998/1. The agenda is as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations:
   (a) Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification deferred from the resumed 1997 session of the Committee;
   (b) New applications for consultative status and new requests for reclassification.
4. Review of quadrennial reports deferred from the resumed 1997 session.
5. Implementation of Economic and Social Council decision 1996/302.
6. Review of the methods of work of the Committee: implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 and decision 1995/304.
7. Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/32.
8. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 1994/50.
9. Provisional agenda and documentation for the 1999 session of the Committee.
10. Adoption of the report of the Committee.

E. Request by a non-governmental organization for the inclusion of an item on the agenda of the Economic and Social Council

87. At its 665th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee had before it a proposal by the Transnational Radical Party, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Council, to include an item entitled "International auxiliary language" in the provisional agenda of the Economic and Social Council at its 1999 substantive session.

88. A number of delegations expressed the view that the matter should be presented to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It was also felt that the views of CONGO would be useful on this issue.

89. At the same meeting, the Committee decided to reject the request by the organization to place such an item on the agenda of the Council.

IX. Adoption of the report of the Committee on the first part of its 1998 session

90. At its 666th meeting, on 29 May 1998, the Committee adopted the draft report contained in documents E/C.2/1998/L.1 and L.2, and authorized the Rapporteur to finalize it in consultation with the members of the Committee, as appropriate.

Annex

List of documents before the Committee at the first part of its 1998 session

Document number	*Agenda item*	*Title or description*
E/1998/43 and Corr.1	6	Work of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Secretariat: report of the Secretary-General
E/C.2/1998/1	2	Provisional agenda
E/C.2/1998/L.1	10	Draft report
E/C.2/1998/L.2	10	Draft report
E/C.2/1998/R.2 and Add.1-4	3 (b)	New applications for consultative status: memorandum by the Secretary-General

United Nations E/1998/72/Add.1

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
14 July 1998

Original: English

Substantive session of 1998
New York, 6–31 July 1998
Agenda item 12
Non-governmental organizations

Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on the second part of its 1998 session (New York, 22–26 June and 1 July 1998)

Addendum

Summary

The present report contains two draft decisions calling for action by the Economic and Social Council.

By draft decision I, the Council would:

(a) Grant consultative status to 83 non-governmental organizations which had applied;

(b) Reclassify three organizations from Roster to special consultative status.

By draft decision II, the Council would authorize the Committee to hold a resumed session in order to complete the work of its 1998 session.

98-20805 (E) 240798

Contents

Chapter		*Paragraphs*	*Page*
I.	Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council	1	3
II.	Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations	2–24	6
	A. New applications for consultative status	3–20	6
	B. New requests for reclassification	21–22	8
	C. Requests for reclassification deferred from the resumed 1997 session	23–24	8
III.	Review of quadrennial reports deferred from the 1997 session	25–26	9
IV.	Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 and decision 1995/304	27–34	9
	A. Strengthening of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Secretariat	28	9
	B. Consideration of special reports	29–34	9
V.	Organization of the session	35–38	10
	A. Opening and duration of the session	35	10
	B. Resumed 1998 session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations	36–38	10
VI.	Adoption of the report of the Committee on the second part of its 1998 session	39	11
Annex			
	Statement of conference-servicing implications of a proposed one-week extension of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations		12

I. Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council

1. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations recommends to the Economic and Social Council the following draft decisions:

DRAFT DECISION I

Applications for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations

The Economic and Social Council decides:

(a) To grant the following non-governmental organizations consultative status:

General consultative status

International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW)

Special consultative status

8th Day Centre for Justice

Association for Assistance to Families with Disabled Children

Association des états généraux des étudiants de l'Europe (AEGEE)

Association européenne contre les violences faites aux femmes au travail (AVFT)

Association of Interbalkan Women's Cooperation Societies

Association pour le progrès et la défense des droits des femmes maliennes (APDF)

Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women

Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR)

Centre of People's Help "Blagovest" – International Public Charitable Organization (CHP "Blagovest")

Centro di Ricerca e Documentazione Febbraio 74 (CERFE)

Children Australia

Chinese Women's Association of America/Chinese Women's Association America Foundation

Chinese Immigrants Services, Inc.

Croatian World Congress

Deutsche Welthungerhilfe

Federation européenne des femmes actives au foyer (FEFAF)

Femmes actives au foyer

Flora Tristan, Peruvian Women's Centre

Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE)

Fundació EcoMediterrània

The Grail

Gram Bharati Samiti (GBS)

Grassroots Organization Operating Together in Sisterhood (GROOTS)

Il Cenacolo

INCORVUZ Corporation

Institute of Global Education

Institute of Inter-Balkan Relations

Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development

International Association for Feminist Economics

International Council of Chemical Associations

International First Aid Society

International Geothermal Association

International Network for Sustainable Energy (INFORSE)

International Research Foundation for Development

International Wages for Housework Campaign

International Women Count Network

International Women's Democracy Centre

Italian Association for Women in Development (AIDOS)

Japanese Association of International Women's Rights (JAIWR)

Kongres Wanita Indonesia (KOWANI)

Korean Federation for Environmental Movement

Korean National Council of Women

MAMTA-Health Institute for Mother and Child

Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers

Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic, Inc.

Mauritius Family Planning Association

Mennonite Central Committee

Movimento Italiano Casalinghe (MOICA)

National Association for Resource Improvement (NARI)

National Coordinator for Human Rights

National Federation of Women for Democracy

National Women's Union of Romania

Organization for Defending Victims of Violence

Organisation tunisienne des jeunes médicins sans frontières

Paukuutit Inuit Women's Association of Canada

People's Decade of Human Rights Education (PDHRE)

Presbyterian Church (USA)

Programme national de prevention, de lutte et d'assistance humanitaire aux victimes des catastrophes naturelles (PRONAPLUCAN)

Real Women of Canada

Sto. Nino Organic Farmers, Inc.

Saviya Development Foundation

School Sisters of Notre Dame

"Social Ecology" Foundation

Soroptomist Union of Greece

Teresian Association

Tiye International

Unión de Escritores Y Artistas de Cuba

Union nationale de la femme tunisienne

Unione Intercontinentale Casalinghe (UNICA)

WINVISIBLE-Women with Visible and Invisible Disability

Womankind Worldwide

Women Against Rape

Women and Child Development Association

Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF)

Women's Crisis Centre, The

Women's Forum Scotland

Women's Intercultural Network

World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC)

Roster

International Buddhist Foundation (IBF)

International Wages Due Lesbians

Liga Para Sa Mga Lolang Pilipina (LILA Pilipina)

Netherlands Council of Women

(b) To reclassify three organizations from Roster to special consultative status:

International Council of Psychologists

International Young Catholic Students

Universal Esperanto Association

DRAFT DECISION II

Resumed 1998 session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

The Economic and Social Council decides to authorize the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to hold a resumed session for a period of one week in order to complete the work of its 1998 session.

II. Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations

2. The Committee considered item 3 of its agenda at its 667th to 677th meetings, from 22 to 26 June and on 1 July 1998. It had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General containing requests for reclassifications received from non-governmental organizations (E/C.2/1998/R.1) and a memorandum by the Secretary-General containing new applications for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations (E/C.2/1998/R.2 and Add.1-15).

A. New applications for consultative status

3. At its 651st meeting, on 18 May, the Committee had decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that special consultative status be granted to the European Council of WIZO Federations. At its 660th meeting, on 26 May, the Committee had considered the application in the light of new information that was made available to the members of the Committee.

4. At the same meeting, it was decided that the issue be left pending until the second part of the Committee's 1998 session.

5. At its 674th meeting, on 25 June, the Committee decided to reconsider the decision to recommend consultative status to the European Council of WIZO Federations and to defer the application to its 1999 session, because all of the outstanding issues concerning this application could not be resolved to the full satisfaction of several members of the Committee.

6. At its 673rd meeting, on 25 June, the representative of the United States of America requested a roll-call vote on the proposal to recommend special consultative status to the Union de Escritores Y Artistas de Cuba. The proposal was adopted by a roll-call vote of 12 to 1. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Chile, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Greece, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Philippines, Russian Federation, Tunisia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Against: United States of America.

7. At its 661st meeting, on 27 May, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the Legal Research and Resource Centre for Human Rights to the second part of its 1998 session. At its 675th meeting, on 26 June, the Committee decided to defer the application of the Legal Research and Resource Centre for Human Rights to allow time for the organization to regularize its status as a non-governmental organization at the national level under revised legislation currently before the Egyptian Parliament.

8. At its 666th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee had decided to defer further consideration of the application of Centre de researches, d'études, de documentation et d'information sur la femme (CREDIF) to the second part of its 1998 session. At its 675th meeting, the Committee decided to defer consideration of this organization's application to its 1999 session, pending clarification of its response to questions posed to the organization by the Committee.

9. Also at the same meeting, the Committee decided to defer further consideration of the application of Jammu and Kashmir Council for Human Rights to a later date. The Committee also requested the organization to submit a revised application, using the correct terminology and nomenclature recognized by the United Nations.

10. At its 667th meeting, on 22 June, the Committee decided to recommend to the Council that special consultative status be granted to Liga Para Sa Mga Lolang Pilipina (LILA Pilipina), Inc. At its 676th meeting, on 26 June, the Committee, following reconsideration of the application, decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that Roster status be granted to this organization.

11. At its 670th meeting, on 23 June, the Committee decided to defer consideration of the application of Saviya Development Foundation, a national organization applying for general consultative status, pending receipt of the results of consultations between the Secretariat and the Government of Sri Lanka.

12. The representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland expressed concern at the Committee's decision to defer consideration of an application from a national non-governmental organization in the absence of a comment on the application from that nation's Permanent Mission. The Mission in question had been advised by the Secretariat of the application in good time and had not responded. The decision to defer consideration was not supported by the procedures laid out in Council resolution 1996/31, which governed the Committee's methods of work. There existed no requirement for Member States to respond to Secretariat letters in this regard.

13. The representative of the United Kingdom stated further that this decision ran against the existing rules governing the work of the Committee, and stated his delegation's concern that the Committee, by taking this decision, was in danger of establishing a precedent that could ultimately be to the detriment of its work.

14. Following delivery of this statement, the representative of the United States concurred and asked that it be placed on the record.

15. At its 676th meeting, on 26 June, the Committee decided to recommend to the Council that special consultative status be granted to Saviya Development Foundation.

16. At its 672nd meeting, on 24 June, the Committee decided to defer the application of MOA Foundation, New York, Inc. to a later date, pending the receipt from the organization of additional information, including an application submitted on behalf of its main office instead of its national office.

17. At its 675th meeting, on 26 June, the Committee decided to recommend to the Council that special consultative status be granted to the Presbyterian Church (USA). The representative of the Russian Federation proposed, before the consideration of the above-mentioned application, that the Committee come to a definitive decision on the eligibility of churches and religious bodies as non-governmental organizations. The Committee continued consideration of the application following a statement by the Chairman, who emphasized that subsequent applications by other churches and religious bodies would be examined in a similar way, based on the principle of non-discrimination, and would be considered on an individual case-by-case basis.

18. At its 676th meeting, on 26 June, the Committee decided to recommend to the Council that special consultative status be granted to the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence. The representative of Ireland requested that the report reflect his delegation's disassociation from this decision.

19. The following applications were deferred pending:

(a) Further consideration by the Committee:

International Federation of Inspection Agencies

(b) Receipt of further information from the organization:

Association for the Protection of the Environment, Cairo, Egypt

Community Social Welfare Foundation

European Fertilizer Manufacturers Association

Human Rights Alliance

International Rescue Committee

Israel Women's Network

National Women's Council of Catalonia

South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre

Union interafricaine des droits de l'homme

Women Justice Programme

Women's Exchange Program International

(c) A final decision by the Committee:

Action Health, Inc.

International Group of P&I Clubs

20. The Committee recommended that the Council grant consultative status to 83 non-governmental organizations (see sect. I above, draft decision I).

B. New requests for reclassification

21. The Committee decided to recommend that the Council reclassify three organizations from Roster to special consultative status (see sect. I above, draft decision I):

Special status

International Council of Psychologists

International Young Catholic Students

Universal Esperanto Association

22. The Committee decided to defer the applications of the following four organizations which had applied for reclassification to its resumed 1998 session:

Caritas Internationalis

International Council of Environmental Law

World Alliance of Reformed Churches

World Blind Union

C. Requests for reclassification deferred from the resumed 1997 session

23. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, the Committee had considered a request for reclassification to special consultative status of International P.E.N., an organization on

the Roster, and decided to defer further consideration of this organization's request to the second part of its 1998 session following the request of a delegation for additional time to study the information provided by the organization.

24. At its 677th meeting, on 1 July, the Committee decided to defer consideration of this request.

III. Review of quadrennial reports deferred from the 1997 session

25. At its resumed 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the quadrennial reports of the International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations and the Mutual Assistance of the Latin American Government Oil Companies to its 1998 session. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, the Committee, noting that the requested clarifications had not yet been provided by either of these organizations, had decided to defer consideration of their reports to the second part of its 1998 session.

26. At its 677th meeting, on 1 July, the Committee decided to defer consideration of the reports of the International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations and the Mutual Assistance of the Latin American Government Oil Companies.

IV. Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 and decision 1995/304

27. The Committee considered item 6 of its agenda at its 676th and 677th meetings, on 26 June and 1 July 1998.

A. Strengthening of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Secretariat

28. At its 677th meeting, on 1 July, the Committee took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Secretariat (E/1998/43). The report had been prepared pursuant to Council resolution 1997/58, in which the Council had requested the Secretary-General to set out specific proposals to ensure that the workload of the Section could be effectively and efficiently accomplished. In addition, the report before the Committee had incorporated a description of the expanded functions and responsibilities assumed by the Section in the current biennium (1998–1999).

B. Consideration of special reports

29. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, after examining the additional information provided by Liberation, the Committee had decided to defer further consideration of the special report provided by the organization to the second part of its 1998 session.

30. At its 677th meeting, on 1 July, the Committee decided to defer further consideration of the report.

31. At its 665th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee had decided that more detailed information be requested by the Secretariat from the Government of Colombia and the Chairman of the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights regarding the

accreditation, by Movimiento Indio Tupaj Amaru and the World Federation for Democratic Youth, two organizations in consultative status with the Council, of individuals known to belong to the revolutionary group Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC).

32. The information provided by the office of the Chairman of the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights has been circulated by the Secretariat to members of the Committee for the resumed 1998 session of the Committee.

33. At its 676th meeting, on 26 June, the Committee had before it a letter from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding the accreditation, by four organizations in consultative status with the Council, of individuals belonging to a terrorist group, to participate in the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights.

34. At the same meeting, the Committee decided that the following four organizations should each submit a special report in order to clarify the situation:

World Confederation of Labor

Pax Christi International

International Federation of Women in Legal Careers

Movement Against Racism and for Friendship Among Peoples

V. Organization of the session

A. Opening and duration of the session

35. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations held the second part of its 1998 session from 22 to 26 June and 1 July 1998. The Committee held 11 meetings (667th to 677th).

B. Resumed 1998 session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

36. At its 677th meeting, on 1 July, the Committee decided to recommend that the Economic and Social Council adopt the following draft decision (see sect. I above, draft decision II), which was read out by the Chairman of the Committee:

> "The Economic and Social Council decides to authorize the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to hold a resumed session for a period of one week in order to complete the work of its 1997 session."

37. A statement of conference-servicing implications on the proposal, which was before the Committee, is contained in annex I to the present report.

38. At the same meeting, the Chairman made a statement in which he advised the Committee that he would report to the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council on the difficulties facing the Committee in completing its increased workload.

VI. Adoption of the report of the Committee on the second part of its 1998 session

39. At its 677th meeting, on 1 July, the Committee adopted the draft report contained in an informal paper, and authorized the Rapporteur to finalize the report in consultation with the members of the Committee, as appropriate.

Annex

Statement of conference-servicing implications of a proposed one-week extension of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

Under the terms of the draft proposal, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations would recommend to the Economic and Social Council the holding of a one-week resumed session.

The proposed extension would entail the provision of 10 additional meetings (two meetings per day for five days), with interpretation services in the six official languages. There will be an additional 10 pages of in-session documentation, to be processed in six languages.

It is to be noted that the proposed timing of the resumed session (21–25 September or 14–18 December 1998) falls during the regular session of the General Assembly. During this period, all conference-servicing resources are reserved for the exclusive use of the Assembly and other related meetings of regional groups. Furthermore, not even subsidiary bodies of the Assembly are allowed to hold meetings at this time without the explicit authorization of the Assembly itself. It is therefore understood that the resumed session of the Committee, if approved, will be accommodated subject to the availability of conference facilities and services without adversely affecting the work of the Assembly.

The full cost of providing conference services for the resumed session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations is estimated at $286,000. The extent to which the Organization's permanent capacity would need to be supplemented by temporary assistance resources can be determined only in the light of the calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 1998–1999. However, provision is made under section 27E, Conference services, of the 1998–1999 programme budget not only for meetings programmed at the time of the budget preparation but also for meetings authorized subsequently, provided that the number and distribution of meetings are consistent with the pattern of meetings of past years.

Consequently, should the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations decide to adopt the draft proposal, no additional appropriations would be required for the 1998–1999 programme budget.

United Nations E/1998/73

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
22 June 1998

Original: English

Substantive session of 1998
New York, 6-31 July 1998
Item 6 of the provisional agenda*
Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits

Statement of commitment of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for action to eradicate poverty

1. Executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system reaffirm that poverty eradication – a main underlying theme of recent global conferences – is a key international commitment and a central objective of the United Nations system. They commit themselves collectively to undertaking a renewed effort to coordinate policy approaches and give new impetus to collaborative actions by the United Nations organizations and agencies in this crucial area.

The challenge

2. The paradox of today's world is nowhere more clearly reflected than in the dynamics of globalization, which brings at the same time extraordinary potential and huge risks. On the one hand, never before has so much progress been achieved in such a short span of time in lifting hundreds of millions out of poverty. On the other hand, more than a billion people still live on less than one dollar a day, and almost three billion live on less than two dollars a day.

3. ACC emphasizes that fundamentally, poverty is a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society. It means not having enough to feed and clothe a family, not having a school or a clinic to go to, not having the land on which to grow one's food or a job to earn one's living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities. It means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living on marginal and fragile environments, without access to clean water and sanitation.

4. Executive heads are convinced that this situation is unacceptable since the world has the resources and the capacity, if it so chooses, to eradicate absolute poverty. They see in the current global environment a real chance to qualitatively improve the conditions of life for the vast majority of the people on this planet who live in poverty. They call upon the world community to seize this historic opportunity to create a better world. They reaffirm that the United Nations system has the obligation to mobilize the will of the international community to achieve this goal.

5. ACC is conscious that poverty is a global phenomenon. Widespread in developing countries, it also affects industrial societies and is growing in countries with economies in transition. It must be addressed in all its manifestations. Member States, at the national and international levels, have the primary responsibility in this regard. The challenge is to harness the forces of global integration, not to run away from them. At the same time, the risks of economic polarization,

* E/1998/100.

98-18151 (E) 060798

the risks of economic polarization, social exclusion and growing inequalities must be averted. Protecting the right of all to a minimum standard of living is good economics because investment in the poor, including women and children, offers the best guarantee of sustained growth and productivity gains in the future. Eradication of poverty is today an indispensable condition for lasting peace. Without the full and effective participation of the poor in global growth, the challenge of peace and development will not be met.

6. ACC recognizes that poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon and that the challenge of its eradication is vast and complex: poverty must be addressed in all its aspects. Only through building partnerships and investing the necessary resources to make them effective, in particular at the country level, can the challenge of poverty eradication be met. The United Nations system must not only concert its own efforts but also play a supportive and catalytic role in mobilizing the energies and resources of all development actors – Governments, the private sector, civil society, donors and above all the poor themselves – in the campaign against poverty. Executive heads commit themselves to pursuing this effort individually and collectively throughout the United Nations system.

7. ACC acknowledges that education and capacity-building are a major driving force in development since they are the key to any process of empowerment, individual or collective.

8. ACC emphasizes that in dealing with poverty, gender equality and the empowerment of women are major cross-cutting issues that must receive sustained attention. Progress in this area, above all through education, in many cases means progress for the majority of the poor. In developing countries, a large majority of the poor are found in rural areas and depend mainly on agriculture for their livelihood and employment. Among the poor, women and children contribute significantly to food production and household income, yet they are often the main victims of poverty. In order to succeed, poverty eradication strategies must address gender issues by examining the differential impact of policies and programmes on men and women, as well as on adults and children. They must empower women and ensure their access to income-earning opportunities, including in rural areas and the informal sector, and must ensure universal access to basic social services as well, in particular for children.

9. ACC recalls that the international community has set itself a range of interlocking development goals which, taken together, address the overarching challenge of poverty eradication. They include reductions in income poverty, child mortality, maternal mortality and child malnutrition, as well as improvements in life expectancy and access to basic social services, especially among women. These goals provide a powerful foundation for all development partners to marshal the necessary resources and resolve in a global campaign against poverty.

Elements of a shared strategy

10. ACC calls for action to address poverty on a broad front, with the full involvement of Governments and all other development actors in society. This effort must be tailored to fit national and local circumstances and anchored in accurate on-the-ground assessments of the needs of the poor.

11. ACC emphasizes that poverty cannot be eradicated without transparent and accountable government at all levels. Democratization and enhanced protection of human rights are key components of good governance. Good governance also implies a proper balance between state action, the private sector, civil society and the communities themselves. It calls for the empowerment of the poor, their active involvement and participation in poverty-reduction strategies, and improved access by the poor to well-functioning institutions, such as those in the political and judicial systems, that safeguard people's rights.

12. ACC stresses that a sustainable reduction in poverty in the developing world can only be achieved through accelerated and sustained economic growth. This can only occur when Governments follow sound macroeconomic policies and carry out the necessary economic reforms to balance growth with social investments. Sustainable industrial development policies that improve competitiveness while protecting the environment and creating productive employment are an important component of a sound policy framework. Recent events in East Asia have demonstrated the especially critical role of strong and accountable financial and corporate institutions in maintaining the macroeconomic balances. ACC calls upon the international community to extend full support to countries pursuing sound policies and reforms.

13. ACC recognizes that growth, though necessary, is not sufficient for rapid poverty reduction. Growth should be equitable-employment-intensive and pro-poor. Policies should aim to create productive and freely chosen employment as the most effective way of reducing poverty. Growth must be underpinned by sound policies to promote social justice and redress social inequities. The character

and pattern of growth ultimately determine its impact on the lives of the poor. Pro-poor growth calls for rural development, employment creation and access to science and technology. It requires sound pricing policies, an enabling environment for the private sector, and investment in and maintenance of infrastructure needed by poor communities. But action against poverty needs to go beyond economic factors and the enabling environment. It requires special measures to increase the access of the poor to productive assets, including land and credit, and to make them economic, social and civil actors.

14. ACC notes the linkages between population pressures, natural resources, food security, ill health and poverty, and stresses that these must be addressed as an essential component of sustainable development strategies. Executive heads emphasize that sustainable pro-poor growth requires sound environmental policies and in many cases measures to regenerate the resource base on which the livelihoods of the poor depend. It is important to ensure that the poor gain access to resource-saving and energy-saving technologies and environmental education.

15. Growth gives people the opportunity to lift themselves out of poverty. Human development builds their capacity to do so. Experience has shown, however, that too often the poor do not have access to shelter and basic social services, such as health services (including reproductive health services), sanitation and water services, as well as education and training. And even when they do, only low-quality services are available; integrated strategies of empowerment, capacity-building and targeted assistance as well as attention to equity issues are essential to enable the poor to work their way out of poverty.

16. It is also essential to promote a favourable microlevel environment, both in the rural and urban areas, that helps the poor to raise their productivity and income and enables them to have access to assets, technology, infrastructure and fair markets. Such an environment will allow the poor themselves to become principal agents in poverty eradication.

17. A major objective, therefore, is to find ways to fully involve the poor in the design of anti-poverty strategies and reach them with services that meet their requirements, including the specific needs of vulnerable groups such as single women, mothers, children, migrants, the disabled and the elderly. Sufficient public funds must be directed to services used by the poor, based on a sound understanding of their circumstances. But public spending alone is not enough: there must be the institutional capacity to manage and deliver services effectively to the poorest, a recognition of the important role of private and non-governmental providers, and the participation of the poor and their communities. Executive heads are determined to extend the full support of their organizations to countries' efforts to build such institutional capacity.

18. Even in the best of circumstances, there are risks and hazards that can devastate the lives of poor and vulnerable groups. Natural disasters (such as drought and floods), war, economic shocks and epidemics (such as HIV/AIDS), can result in serious losses for the poor – losses in jobs, incomes and assets. Society must be ready to provide safety nets in such circumstances, including employment and income-generating programmes, social assistance, targeted support for the elderly and disabled, programme assisting the internally displaced and food transfers. To eradicate poverty is to prevent its recurrences as much as it is to attack its existing manifestations. The United Nations system remains committed to supporting national efforts towards these ends.

19. ACC stresses that empowerment, participation and social capital are important means for action against poverty, as well as ends in themselves. Strengthening and mobilizing social capital calls for policy and institutional changes that support empowerment of the poor and the full realization of their rights as citizens. It demands changes that promote the political, social and economic advancement of women, as well as of marginalized groups. Special programmes may be required to address the needs of excluded groups, such as indigenous peoples, those living in remote areas and refugees. Society must respond to this challenge of inclusion. ACC calls upon all countries to take these considerations and needs fully into account in their national development strategies, and expresses its determination to extend full support to such strategies with a view to achieving development and peace by addressing the root causes of poverty.

A supportive international environment

20. ACC stresses that it is essential to provide a level playing field in international economic relations, with an emphasis on providing economic access for the poor. This requires creating policies and conditions that enable developing countries, particularly the least developed among them, to benefit from the opportunities for trade, investment and technology transfer brought about by globalization.

21. Executive heads are deeply concerned about the risks of the further marginalization of the poorest countries and

regions, especially Africa. They call upon the international community to extend all possible assistance to its weakest members to enable them to integrate successfully into the world economy. This also entails adopting creative approaches to debt management, relief and reduction in order to free the resources that poor countries need to combat poverty. The flow and quality of official development assistance must also be improved.

Measuring impact and follow-up

22. ACC recognizes that in order to be successful a campaign against poverty must be able to demonstrate its impact. Understanding the dynamics and dimensions of poverty and vulnerability calls for continuing measurement and monitoring. It requires a process of learning that involves generating and sharing information and experience. This will only be successful if it is informed by and implemented with the participation of all affected groups. Executive heads are convinced that accountability, transparency and inclusion at all levels are integral to achieving the goal of poverty eradication.

23. ACC reaffirms that every organization of the system is committed not only to strengthening its own actions but also to working with others to fight poverty in all its forms. ACC recognizes that the measure of the individual organization's actions is the collective impact of the system on poverty. Executive heads agree to work together in the months ahead to identify areas for common action and build partnerships among concerned organizations for pursuing shared objectives in such areas. Ultimately, the measure of our success will be tangible and lasting improvements in the lives of the poor.

United Nations E/1998/74

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 June 1998
English
Original: Arabic/English/French/
Russian/Spanish

Substantive session of 1998
New York, 6-31 July 1998
Item 14 (g) of the provisional agenda*
Social and human rights questions: human rights

General comments of the Human Rights Committee

Note by the Secretary-General

Pursuant to article 40, paragraph 4, of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Secretary-General has the honour to submit to the Economic and Social Council General Comment No. 26 (61) adopted by the Human Rights Committee at its 1631st meeting (sixty-first session) on 29 October 1997 (CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.8/Rev.1).

General Comment No. 26 (61)[1]

General comment on issues relating to the continuity of obligations to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

1. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights does not contain any provision regarding its termination and does not provide for denunciation or withdrawal. Consequently, the possibility of termination, denunciation or withdrawal must be considered in the light of applicable rules of customary international law which are reflected in the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties. On this basis, the Covenant is not subject to denunciation or withdrawal unless it is established that the parties intended to admit the possibility of denunciation or withdrawal or a right to do so is implied from the nature of the treaty.

2. That the parties to the Covenant did not admit the possibility of denunciation and that it was not a mere oversight on their part to omit reference to denunciation is demonstrated by the fact that article 41 (2) of the Covenant does permit a State party to withdraw its acceptance of the competence of the Committee to examine inter-State communications by filing an appropriate notice to that effect while there is no such provision for denunciation of or withdrawal from the Covenant itself. Moreover, the Optional Protocol to the Covenant, negotiated and adopted contemporaneously with it, permits States parties to denounce it.

* E/1998/100.

[1] Adopted at the 1631st meeting (sixty-first session) on 29 October 1997.

98-18157 (E) 090798

Additionally, by way of comparison, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which was adopted one year prior to the Covenant, expressly permits denunciation. It can therefore be concluded that the drafters of the Covenant deliberately intended to exclude the possibility of denunciation. The same conclusion applies to the Second Optional Protocol, in the drafting of which a denunciation clause was deliberately omitted.

3. Furthermore, it is clear that the Covenant is not the type of treaty which, by its nature, implies a right of denunciation. Together with the simultaneously prepared and adopted International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Covenant codifies in treaty form the universal human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the three instruments together often being referred to as the "International Bill of Human Rights". As such, the Covenant does not have a temporary character typical of treaties where a right of denunciation is deemed to be admitted, notwithstanding the absence of a specific provision to that effect.

4. The rights enshrined in the Covenant belong to the people living in the territory of the State party. The Human Rights Committee has consistently taken the view, as evidenced by its longstanding practice, that once the people are accorded the protection of the rights under the Covenant, such protection devolves with territory and continues to belong to them, notwithstanding change in government of the State party, including dismemberment in more than one State or State succession or any subsequent action of the State party designed to divest them of the rights guaranteed by the Covenant.

5. The Committee is therefore firmly of the view that international law does not permit a State which has ratified or acceded or succeeded to the Covenant to denounce it or withdraw from it.